

June 22, 2010

WRONG-WAY DRIVER TASK FORCE UPDATE

The North Texas Tollway Authority's Wrong-Way Driver Task Force continues to research, implement and monitor ways to curtail wrong-way driver incidents. Safety is the NTTA's first priority, and to date, the NTTA has already implemented a number of system enhancements to address these incidents.

- Pilot Project: Loop Detection/Notification Software** – NTTA's Information Technology Department created an interface to the lane controller that can send an audible and visual alert to the NTTA Command Center when exit ramp and main lane loops detect wrong-way movement. The interface performs properly, and Command Center staff completed training on its use. Assessments continue as the NTTA adds more loop sets. Initial Assessment Completed: 04-16-10
- Crash Testing of Lowered Sign Assemblies** – The NTTA engaged the Texas Transportation Institute to perform crash testing of the Authority's proposed lowered sign assemblies. Observations during testing indicate the assembly and sign performed in an acceptable manner. The NTTA Task Force is awaiting TTI's report for assessment by the Task Force. Completed: 03-11-10
- Pilot Project Evaluation Criteria** – Development of evaluation criteria for the LED-enhanced sign pilot project is complete. Completed: 03-10-10
- Lane Level Testing of Loops for WWD Detection** – Testing completed on the Dallas North and Sam Rayburn Tollway's to assess how loop detection of wrong-way movement performs in live traffic conditions. Most alarms received were validated via NTTA's Intelligent Transportation System and were caused by vehicles pulling away from an automated cash machine, stopping and then backing up. Some false alarms are received during loop maintenance. Alarm averages are 4.4 per day on the Dallas North Tollway and 2.5 per day on the Sam Rayburn Tollway. Completed: 02-12-10
- Updated Standard Specifications** – NTTA's Project Delivery Department updated the raised pavement markings/wrong-way arrow detail and sign post conspicuity tape specifications for all future project plans. Completed: 02-12-10
- Red Reflective Tape on Signposts and Raised Pavement Markers** – Deployed system-wide on all exit ramps. These additional countermeasures should enhance sign visibility to possible wrong-way drivers. No further action is needed unless the items perform poorly. Completed: 11-20-09
- Pilot Project: LED-Enhanced "Wrong Way" Signs** – Six LED-enhanced signs were installed Dec. 15, 2009, on three Dallas North Tollway exit ramps. They are being assessed for functionality, maintenance needs, life-cycle costs, performance and visibility, impact on right-way traffic, etc. Assessment could take up to six months. Initial results indicate the signs perform as designed, but there is no indication about their success at deterring wrong-way driving on two locations. The third location had one loop alarm for a vehicle backing up. Estimated Completion of Assessment: 07-30-10
- Roadway Modification at Wycliff Avenue for Southbound DNT Exit Ramp** – The City of Dallas approved the NTTA's plans to build a median that would help eliminate accidental left turns from Wycliff onto the southbound Dallas North Tollway exit ramp. The project will be advertised for bids on July 1. Construction is planned to begin in mid-August to be complete by mid-September. Revised projected cost estimate is \$52,000. Estimated Completion Date: 09-15-10
- Pilot Project: Feasibility Study & Possible Field Testing of Lowered Sign Assemblies** – With a final approval of the assembly from TTI, the NTTA is seeking experimental status with FHWA to allow for field testing of lowered sign assemblies on exit ramps on the NTTA System. NTTA engineers, WWD Task Force members and executives will assess feasibility of sign deployment, and if approved, the Traffic Management Team will determine where best to post the signs. Cost assessments will be completed to determine financial impacts of deployment. NTTA's request was mailed to FHWA the week of June 21; acceptance can take up to six weeks. Estimated Completion Date: 08-06-10

Questions? Suggestions? E-mail the Task Force at safety@ntta.org

To view the Task Force Analysis Report, go to www.ntta.org